

NATIONAL EMS WEEK

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2011

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, May 15th through the 21st is National EMS Week, a week set aside to reflect upon and honor the life-saving and heroic role the Emergency Medical Services, EMS, community plays in our society. While everyone associated with the EMS system is worthy of due praise, I rise today to pay tribute to one particular segment of the EMS system.

In conjunction with EMS Week, the Association of Air Medical Services is instituting the inaugural MedEvac Hour, asking those who are participating in EMS Week to find one hour of the week to recognize the contributions of all those involved in helicopter and fixed-wing aircraft medical transport. As a co-chair of the Congressional Air Medical Caucus, I recognize the vital role the air medical community plays in this nation's health care system.

I would like to take this opportunity to especially commend the exemplary services provided to my constituents in California's 18th congressional district: PHI Air Medical of Modesto, Medi-Flight of Modesto and Merced, REACH Air Medical Services of Stockton, Sky Life Central California of Fresno, and the California Highway Patrol—Central Division. The work they do saves lives and we are grateful for it.

Numerous studies have shown that the first hour following a trauma is a critical period in determining the final health outcome of the patient. However, 46.7 million Americans live more than an hour away from a Level 1 or Level 2 trauma center. When time and distance are critical, helicopter MedEvac is the quickest and most efficient way to get critical level medical care to the patient. MedEvac helicopters are most often utilized for time-sensitive illnesses and injuries such as severe trauma, heart attacks, or strokes. In remote rural areas, MedEvac helicopters are often the only access to definitive treatment and diagnosis. It is estimated that MedEvac helicopters transport approximately 400,000 patients annually, with MedEvac fixed-wing aircraft transporting an additional 100,000-plus patients over longer distances annually.

As early as 1926, the United States Army Air Corps used a converted airplane to transport patients from Nicaragua to an Army hospital in Panama, 150 miles away. Routine MedEvac transport utilizing helicopters began during the Korean conflict in the 1950s. In March of 1970, the Maryland State Police transported the first critically injured trauma patient by helicopter in the United States. The first civilian hospital-based medical helicopter service in the United States was established in 1972 at St. Anthony's Hospital in Denver, Colorado.

As of the close of 2009, there were over 4,400 MedEvac pilots, 600 physicians, 5,500 nurses, and 5,300 paramedics/EMTs staffing MedEvac vehicles, both fixed-wing and helicopter, in the United States. These people save lives every day, providing critical level medical care and safe, rapid transport to the

most appropriate health care facility during the most dire of circumstances. In addition, we cannot overlook the many other people, from aviation mechanics to communication specialists, that play a key role in MedEvac operations.

All of the dedicated men and women of the MedEvac community deserve our heartfelt thanks. I urge all of my colleagues, during this National EMS Week, to take a moment to recognize these unsung heroes and the life-saving services the MedEvac community brings to their districts and across the nation.

HONORING MENDOTA HIGH SCHOOL CHESS TEAM**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2011

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Mendota High School Chess Team, home of the mighty Aztecs, on their first place victory at the CalChess State Championships held recently in Santa Clara, California. This event drew more than 1,300 students from over 100 schools from across our great Golden State.

This victory is especially fitting as it clearly embodies the classic "underdog" tale. Mendota is not where you would normally expect to find the state's top high school chess team. As their coach Vanessa French explained, "I taught my kids a long time ago, don't be frightened by the bedazzled or the bling-bling . . . I have never told them we couldn't win."

A small agricultural community, Mendota is located in the western portion of California's Central Valley. I am proud to represent this community with its population of 10,000. Historically known for its reputation as The Cantaloupe Center of the World; sadly Mendota has recently become known to many in our nation for its chronic high unemployment rate, at times hovering near 45%. Most residents of Mendota are hard working migrant farmworkers and earn, on average, one-third of what other Californians earn. Culturally, chess is not a game played in the homes of many Mendota families, who are busy simply trying to make ends meet.

Yet, despite these tremendous odds, the students from Mendota High School returned home as state champions, winning first place in the Premier Division and earning eight team and individual medals and trophies.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the hard work, dedication and spirit of strategic competitiveness that runs through each and every one of these impressive students. I congratulate students Julian Estrada, Chrispen Reyes, Luis Castillo, Felipe Beltran, Jessi Mendez, Kevin Romero, Sergio Mayares, Milton Arroyo, and Edwin Brioso and Coach Vanessa French on their great victory and ask that you join me in wishing continued success to all those at Mendota High School who worked so tirelessly on this victory.

A TRIBUTE TO LOIS ANN JOHNSON

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2011

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lois Ann Johnson of Humboldt, Iowa for being the recipient of the Inspiration Award at the 2011 Humboldt County Spirit Awards.

The Humboldt County Spirit Awards were established to recognize and honor outstanding groups and individuals who have worked for the benefit of all citizens of Humboldt County, to celebrate the accomplishments and activities of our communities, to acknowledge the value of volunteerism in the county, and to have a positive impact on community spirit.

Annually included in the Spirit Awards, the Inspiration Award is presented to an individual with a "can-do" attitude who is involved in all facets of the community both as a leader and team player. Lois was recognized for her extensive volunteer work at her local hospital auxiliary, church, and care centers, just to name a few. Lois was also recognized as a mentor at the elementary school and as president of the advisory group associated with the community's CARE team.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent Lois Ann Johnson in the United States Congress. I know that my colleagues join me in commending her for her sincere dedication to establishing a better community and wish her continued success well into the future.

H.R. 1229 AND H.R. 1231

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2011

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, this week, the House majority is taking up legislation that helps the profits of Big Oil but does nothing to curb a future oil disaster or bring down oil and gas prices. H.R. 1229 and H.R. 1231 both greatly expand U.S. offshore drilling while removing crucial environmental safeguards and limiting oversight of the oil and gas industry. It has been a little over a year since the gulf oil spill and these bills ignore the lessons learned from this environmental and public health disaster that resulted from the explosion that took the lives of 11 Americans.

I fully support national energy policies that increase energy independence but these must be done in a way that protects our environment and uses our natural resources responsibly. It is important that any energy policies we put in place provide greater efficiency and accountability to the management and regulation of our energy resources.

That is not what the legislation before us will do. I urge my colleagues to vote "no."